

**A  
LETTER  
FROM THE  
DEVIL,  
TO THE  
POPE  
AND HIS  
PRELATES,**  
Written at the beginning of the Reforma-  
tion, and now published for the Confirmation of  
*Protestants, and Confusion of Papists.*

**LUCIFER**, Prince of darkness and profound heaviness, Emperour of the  
high Mysteries of the King of *Acheron*, Captain of the dungeon *Erebus*, King  
of Hell, and Controller of the infernal fire; To all our children of pride,  
and companions of our Kingdom; and especially to our Princes of the Church  
of this later age and time (of which our adversary *Jesus Christ*, according to the  
Prophecy saith, *I hate the Church or congregation of the wicked*) send Greeting. Know  
ye, that in times past certain Vicars or Vicegerents of Christ, following his  
steps in Miracles and Vertues, living and continuing in a beggarly life, converted (in  
a manner) the whole World, from the yoke of our tyranny unto their doctrine and  
manner

manner of life, to the great derision and contempt of our prison-house and Kingdom, and also to the no little prejudice and hurt of our jurisdiction and authority: For then received we no tribute of the World, neither did the miserable sort of common people rush at the gates of our deep dungeon as they were wont to do with continual pealing and raoping, but then the easie, pleasant and broad way that leadeth unto death, lay still without great noise of trampling travellers: and when all our Courts were without Suitors, Hell then began to howl; and thus continuing in great heaviness and anguish, was robbed and spoiled.

Which thing considered, the impatient rage of our stomach could no longer suffer, neither could the ugly wretches negligence of our great Captain any longer endure. But we, seeking remedy for the time that shall come after, have provided us of a very fit expedient. For instead of these Apostles and other their Adherents which draw by the same line of theirs, as well in manners as doctrine, and are odious enemies to us, We have caused you to be their Successors, and put you in their place, which be Prelates of the Church in these later times by our great and mighty subtilty, as Christ hath said of you, *They have reigned, but not by me.* Once we promised Him all the Kingdoms of the World, if he would fall down and worship us; but he would not, saying, *My Kingdom is not of this world;* and went his way when the multitude would have made him a Temporal King. But to you truly that are fallen from the state of grace, and that serve us in the earth, is that my promise fulfilled: and by our means all worldly things which we have bestowed upon you, are under your government. For he hath said of us as ye know, *The Prince of this world cometh, &c.* and hath made us to reign over all children of unbelief. Therefore our Adversaries before recited, did patiently submit themselves unto the Princes of the World, and did teach that men should do so, saying, *Be ye subject to every creature for Gods cause, whether it be to the King as most chief.* And again, *Obey them that rule over you, &c.* But I think it long till we have poured our poison upon the earth, and therefore fill your selves full. And now be ye contrary to those Fathers in your life and conditions, and extoll your selves above all other men. Neither do ye give to God that which belongeth to him, nor yet to *Cæsar* that which is his: but exercise you the power of both the Swords, according to our Decrees, making your selves doers in worldly matters, fighting in our quarrel; intangled with secular labour and business. And climb ye by little and little from the miserable state of poverty, unto the highest seats of all honours, and the most Princely places of dignity by your devised practices, and false and deceitful wiles and subtilty; that is, by hypocrisie, flattery, lying, perjury, treasons, deceits, simony and other greater wickedness, than which our infernal Furies may devise. For after that ye have by us been advanced thither where ye would be, yet that doth not suffice you, but as greedy starvelings more hungry than ye were before, ye suppress the poor, scratch and rake together all that comes to hand, perverting and turning every thing topsie-turvy; so swollen, that ready ye are to burst with pride, living like Lechers in all corporal delicateness, and by fraud directing all your doings. You challenge to your selves names of honour in the earth, calling your selves Lords, holy, yea, and most holy persons.

Thus, either by violence ye raven, or else by ambition subtilly ye pilfer away, and wrongfully wrest, and by false title possess those goods, which for the sustentation of the poor members of Christ (whom from our first fall we have hated) were bestowed and given, consuming them as your selves list, and therewith ye cherish and maintain an innumerable sort of Whores, Strumpets and Bawds, with whom ye ride pompously like mighty Princes, far otherwise going, than those poor beggarly Priests of the Primitive Church. For I would ye should build your selves rich and gorgeous Palaces:



Palaces : fare like Princes, eating the daintiest meats, and drinking the pleasantest wines that may be gotten : hoard and heap together an infinite deal of treasure ; not like to him that said, *Gold and Silver have I none* ; and serve and fight for us according unto our wages. O most acceptable society, promised unto us by the Prophet, and of those Fathers long ago reprov'd, whilst that Christ called thee *the Synagogue of Satan*, and the mighty Whore which committed fornication with the Kings of the earth, the adulterous Spouse of Christ, and of a chaste person made a strumpet. Thou hast left thy first love, and hast cleaved unto us, O our beloved *Babylon*, O our Citizens, which from the transmigration of *Jerusalem* come hither : we love you for your deserts, we rejoyce over you which condemn the Laws of *Simon Peter*, and embrace the Laws of *Simon Magus* our friend ; buying and selling spiritual things in the Church of God, and against the commandment of God. Ye give benefices and honours by petition, or else for money, for favour, or else for filthy service. And refusing to admit those that be worthy to Ecclesiastical Dignities, and preferring those that are unworthy, ye call unto the inheritance of God's Sanctuary, Bawds, Liars, Flatterers, your Nephews and your own Children, and to a childish Boy ye give many Prebends, the least whereof ye deny to bestow upon a poor good man : ye esteem the person of a man, and receive gifts, ye regard money, and have no regard of souls. Ye have made the house of God a den of thieves. All abuse, all extortion is more exercis'd a hundred fold in your judgement-seats, than with any Secular Tyrant. Ye make Laws and keep not the same, and ye dispense with your dispensations as it pleaseth you : ye justify the wicked for rewards, and ye take away the just mans desert from him. And briefly ye commit all kind of mischief, even as it is our will ye should. And ye take much pains for lucre's sake in our service, and especially to destroy the Christian faith. For now the Lay people are almost in doubt what they may believe, because if ye preach any thing to them at some times (although it be but seldom seen, and that negligently enough, even as we would have it) yet notwithstanding they believe you not, because they see manifestly, that ye do clean contrary to that you say. Whereupon the common people, doing as ye do who have the government of them, run headlong into a whole Sea of Vices, and so continually a very great multitude flocketh at the strong and well fenced gates of our dungeon. And thus the Sovereignty of our Empire by you hath been reformed, and our intolerable loss restored. Wherefore, most specially we commend you, and give you most hearty thanks, exhorting you all, that in any wise ye persevere and continue as hitherto ye have done : and that from henceforth ye slack not your enterprise. For why ? by your helps we purpose to bring the whole World again under our power and dominion. Furthermore we counsel you which occupy the highest rooms of all other, that ye work subtilly, and that ye ( feignedly ) procure peace between the Princes of the World, but that ye cherish and procure secret causes of discord. And like as craftily ye have destroyed and subverted the *Roman* Empire, so suffer ye no Kingdom to be overmuch enlarged or enriched by tranquillity and peace ; lest perhaps in so great tranquillity they dispose themselves to view and consider your most wicked works, suppressing on every side your estate ; and from your treasures take away such substance, as we have caused to be reserved and kept in your hands. We would ye should do our commendations to our entirely beloved daughters, Pride, Deceit, Wrath, Avarice, Belly-cheer and Lechery, and to all other my daughters ; and especially to Lady Simony, which hath made you men, and enriched you, and hath given you suck with her own breasts, and weaned you, and therefore see that in no wise ye call her Sin. And be ye lofty and proud, because that the most high dignity of your estate doth require such magnificence. And also

also be ye covetous, for whatsoever ye get and gather into your fardel, it is for  
 St. Peter, for the peace of the Church, and for the defence of your patrimony and  
 the Crucifix; and therefore ye may lawfully do it. Ye may promote your Cardinals  
 to the highest seat of Dignities without any let in all the world, in stopping the mouth  
 of our adversary Jesus Christ, and alledging again, that he preferred his kinsfolks  
 (being but of poor and base degree) unto the Apostleship; but do not you so, but  
 rather call, as ye do, those that live in arogance, in haughtiness of mind and filthy  
 lechery, unto the state of wealthy riches and pride; and those rewards and promo-  
 tions, which the followers of Christ forsook, do ye distribute unto your friends.  
 Therefore as ye shall have better understanding, prepare ye vices cloaked under the  
 similitude of virtues. Alledge for your lives the glosses of the holy Scripture, and  
 wrest them directly to serve for your purpose. And if any preach or teach otherwise  
 than ye will, oppress ye him violently with the sentence of Excommunication, and  
 by your Censures heaped one upon another, by the consent of your brethren, let him  
 be condemned as an heretick, and let him be kept in most strait prison, and there tor-  
 mented till he dye, for a terrible example to all such as consents Christ. And set-  
 ting all favour apart, cast him out of your Temple, lest peradventure the engrafted  
 word may save your souls; which word habbort, as I do the souls of other faithfull  
 men. And do you endeavour, that ye may deserve to have the place which we have pre-  
 pared for you, under the most wicked foundation of our dwelling place. Fare  
 you well with such felicity as we desire, and intend finally to reward and recom-  
 pence you with such felicity as we desire.

*Given at the Center of the earth, in that our dark place, where all the rabble-  
 ment of Devils were present, specially for this purpose, called unto our  
 most dolorous Consistory, under the character of our terrible seal, for the  
 confirmation of the premisses.*

*And thus the sovereignty of our Empire by you hath  
 been returned, and our noble lord restored, and you in a happy  
 command you, and give you in a happy thanks, and thank you in a happy  
 we restore and continue as hitherto we have done, and thank you in a happy  
 we your empire, and we by your help we purpose to bring the whole world  
 again under our power and dominion. Furthermore we could not which occupy  
 the highest rooms of all cities, that we work industriously, and that we (leisurely) pro-  
 cure peace between the Princes of the World, but that we cherish and procure the  
 one another discord. And like a King we have destroyed and subdued the ex-  
 ceptance, to suffer us no Kingdom to be overmuch enlarged or enriched by tran-  
 spire, and peace; let perhaps in to give tranquillity they dispose themselves to  
 we and consider your most noble works, labelling on every side your empire;  
 and from your riches take away such abundance as we have caused to be reserved  
 and keep in your hands. We would ye should do our commendations to our country  
 beloved daughters, Prince, Duke, Count, Bishop, Abbot, and I know, and to  
 all other my daughters; and especially to Lady Simony, which hath made you men  
 and enriched you, and hath given you such wealth, and we have you men  
 and therefore we that in no way we call her sin. And in we love and proud be-  
 cause that the most high King of your estate doth endure his magnificence.*